



Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

Clearing Disaster Debris

- You are responsible for clearing debris from your own property.
- Clear streets and roads first to allow emergency vehicles to pass freely.
- Next, clear any debris from your own property that represents a safety hazard.
- Use a chipping machine to eliminate fallen branches.
- Burning tree debris may not be permitted. If permitted, let trees dry until foliage begins to fall. Put debris in large compact piles and cover with fuel oil. Stoke piles and keep fire alive until all woody material is burned.
- When working with damaged or fallen trees, observe safety precautions to prevent injury or death.
 - Stabilize ladders when pruning trees; climb into trees to prune. Use a safety rope.
 - Be careful of electric power lines.
 - Observe safety precautions with a chainsaw. Shut off motor even when you are moving only a few feet.
 - Clear the area before beginning to saw limbs or trees. Determine the direction the tree will fall. Do not allow tree to fall into other tree branches. Plan an escape route in case the tree jumps off the stump when it is cut.
- Try to remove garbage as soon as possible to prevent rat infestations and other health problems.

Adapted from resource material developed by the Florida Extension Service entitled “The Disaster Handbook” and the Georgia Extension Service entitled “Natural Disasters in Georgia: Clearing Debris from Land”